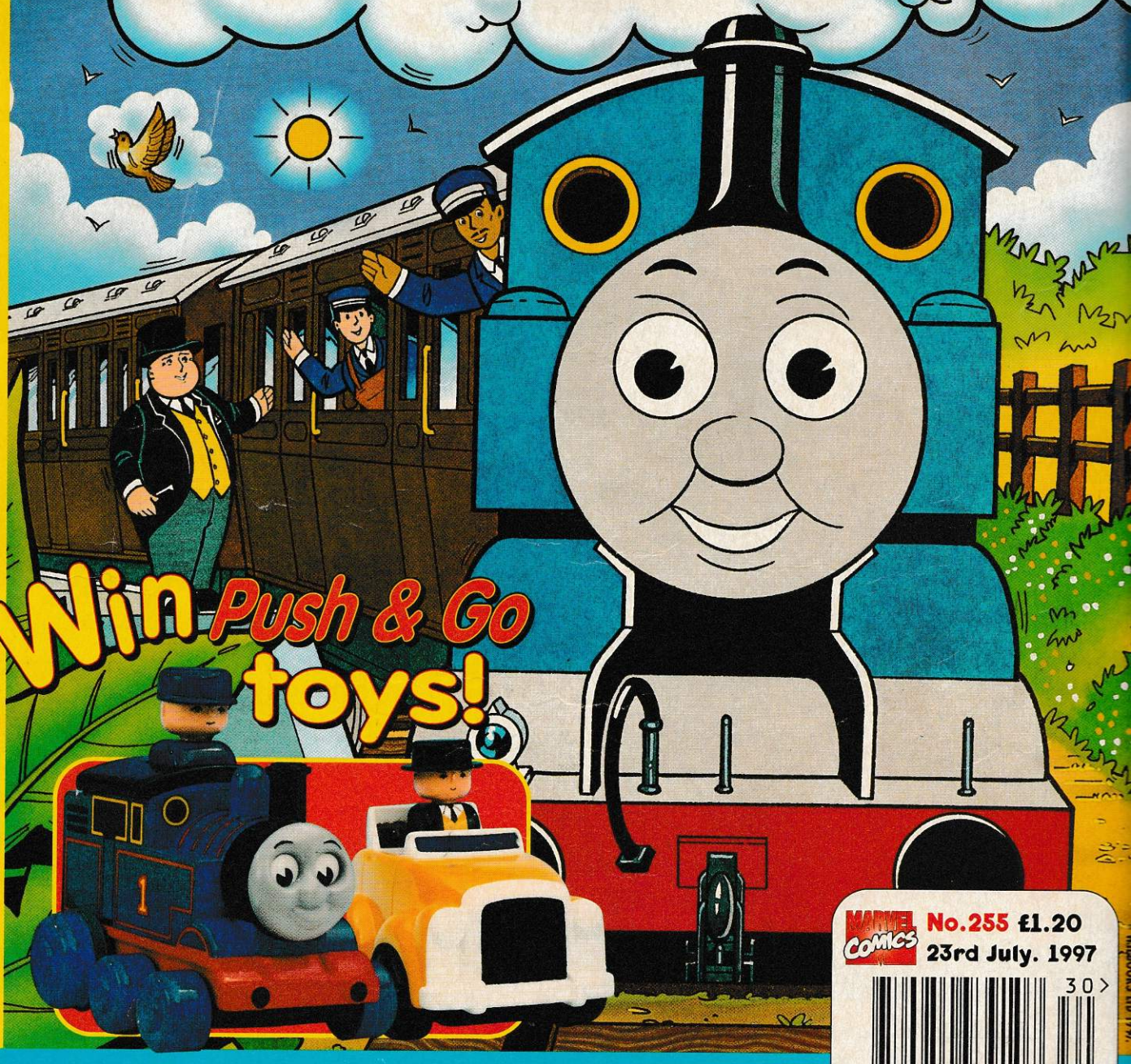
Great Stories!

LET'S READ TOGETHER

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS™

Based on the Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.



THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS

MARVEL COMICS No.255 £1.20
23rd July. 1997
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Puzzles · Reading · Colouring

Hello, everybody!

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Island of Sodor Railway

This comic belongs to

.....

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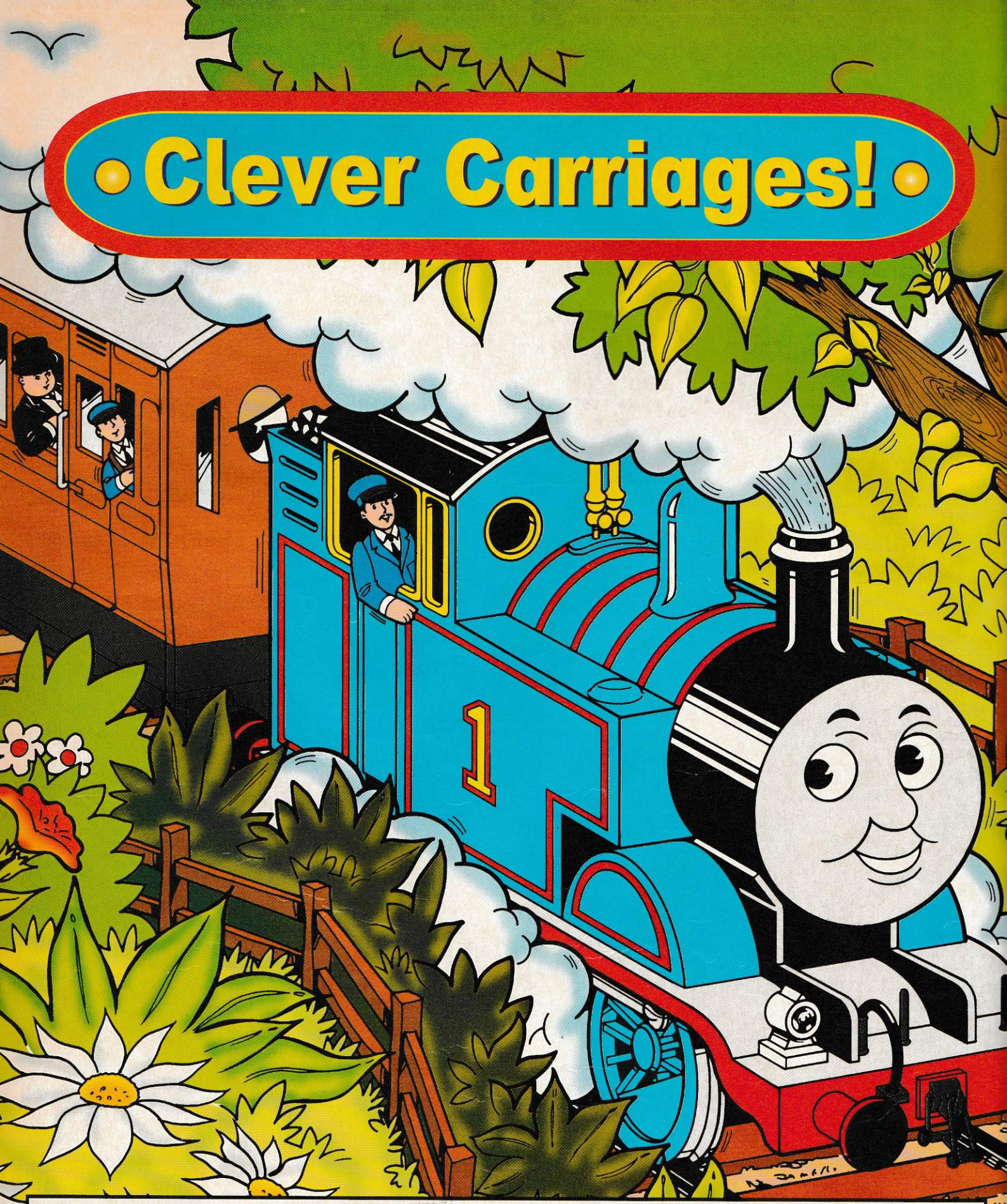
Clever Carriages!

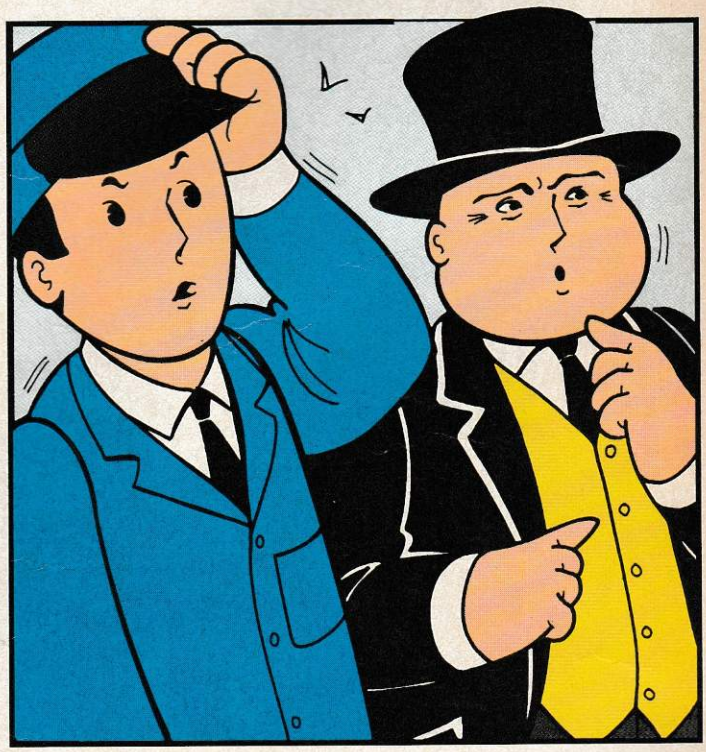


1. Thomas was making a very special trip. He felt Really Useful. So did his faithful carriages, Annie and Clarabel, because the Fat Controller and other railwaymen were on board.

2. "They have to make an inspection," explained Thomas' driver. "What's that?" asked the puzzled little tank engine. "It means they must go and look at something," added his driver.

3. "I wonder what it can be? I'm sure it must be very important," said Annie. At a junction, Thomas turned on to a quiet sideline that went deep into the sunny countryside.

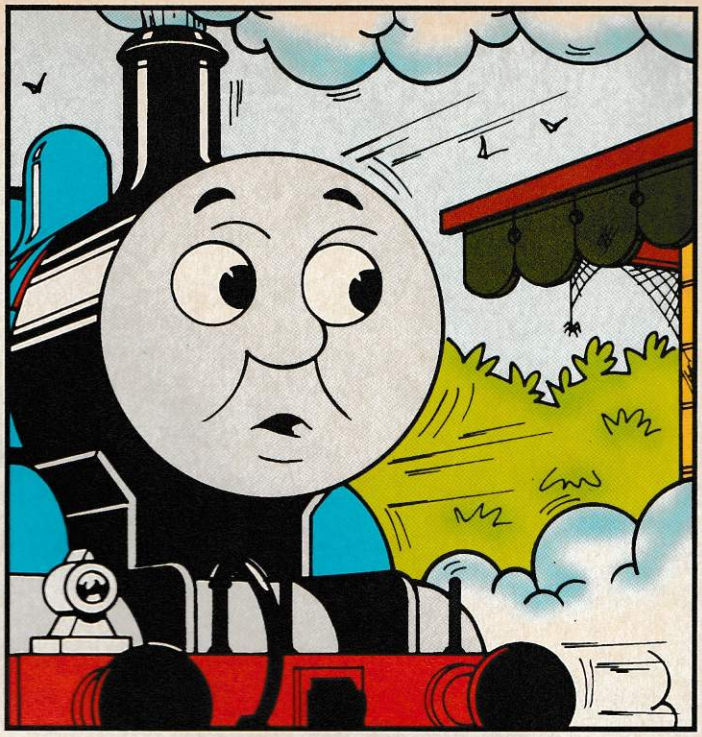
4. An old, disused station was at the far end of the track. Thomas saw a small, tumbled-down waiting room and stationmaster's office. "It's just a pile of bricks," he exclaimed.



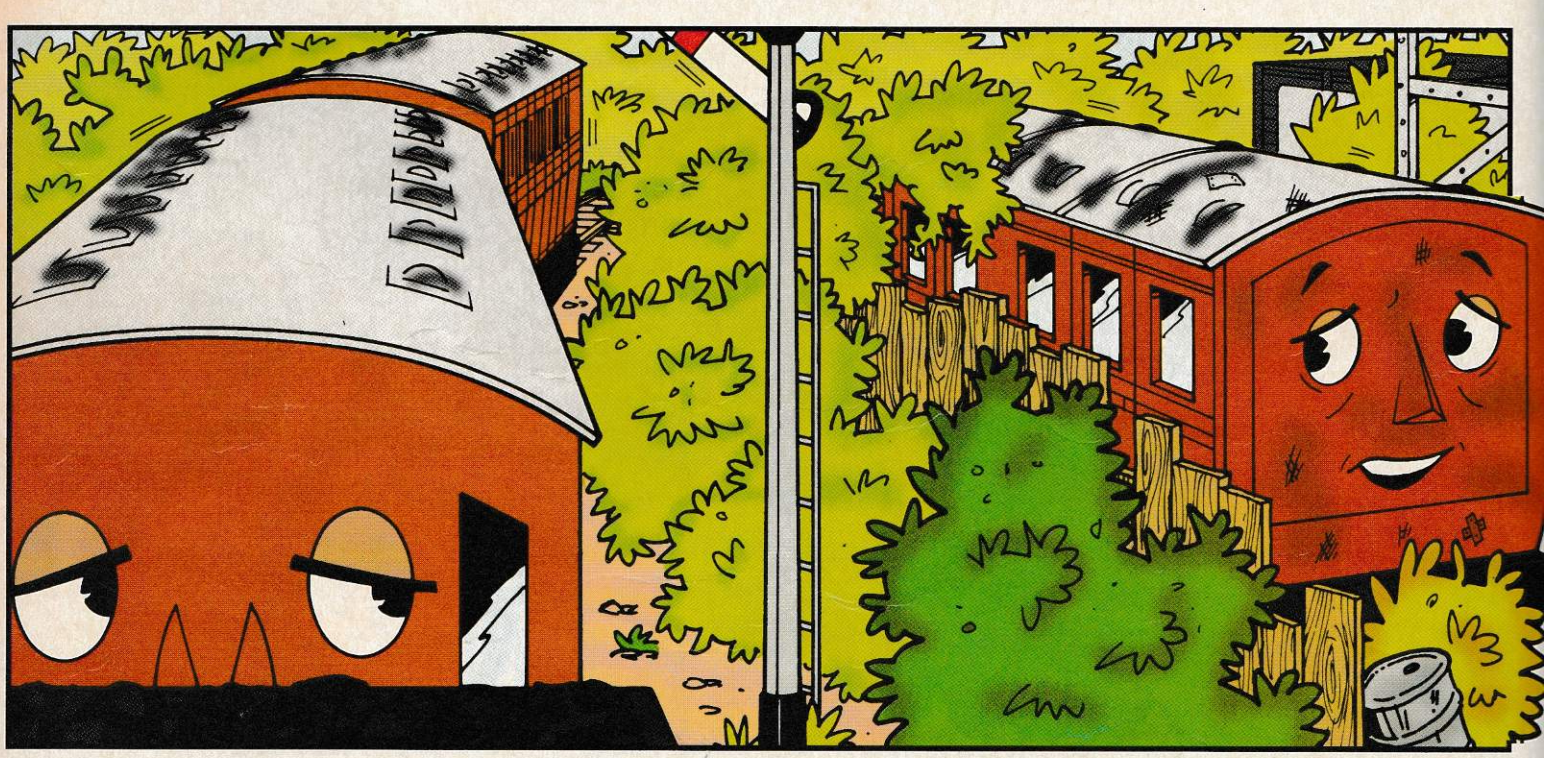
5. "How can this ruined station be important?" gasped Thomas. "Don't ask us!" replied his carriages. The Fat Controller and other passengers stepped down onto the platform.

6. They inspected everything. "The track is still in working order but the waiting room and stationmaster's office must be rebuilt," said the Fat Controller. "It will cost too much."

7. He told Thomas that people were moving back into the cottages and farms, close by. "They'll need a train service from here to Thomas' branch line," said the Fat Controller.



8. The trouble was there wouldn't be enough passengers to pay the cost of any new station buildings. "If only we could help," Thomas said to Annie and Clarabel, as they left.



9. When Thomas stopped at a signal, Annie saw an old carriage, with a sad face, standing alone in an overgrown shunting yard. "I wish we could help that carriage," sighed kindly Annie.

10. "It's not often I see visitors," smiled the care-worn carriage. "I've just been left here. I'm not modern enough to be of use, anymore." Annie and Clarabel felt very sorry indeed.

11. They kept thinking about the carriage all the way back to the Main Station. Suddenly, Annie had an idea. “What a grand idea!” the Fat Controller said, when he heard.

12. So Thomas was sent to tow the lonely carriage to the old station. He brought a crane to lift the carriage off its rusting wheels, onto the platform. Workmen repaired and painted it.

13. The old station was cleaned up and the sideline was reopened. The carriage had a very unusual job. "I'm back in service, after all," she said. "I won't ever be lonely again!"

14. The carriage became a waiting room and stationmaster's office! "It was cheaper than building new ones," said Annie. "Carriages are clever!" "Humph!" huffed Thomas.

PEEP! PEEP! THE END!

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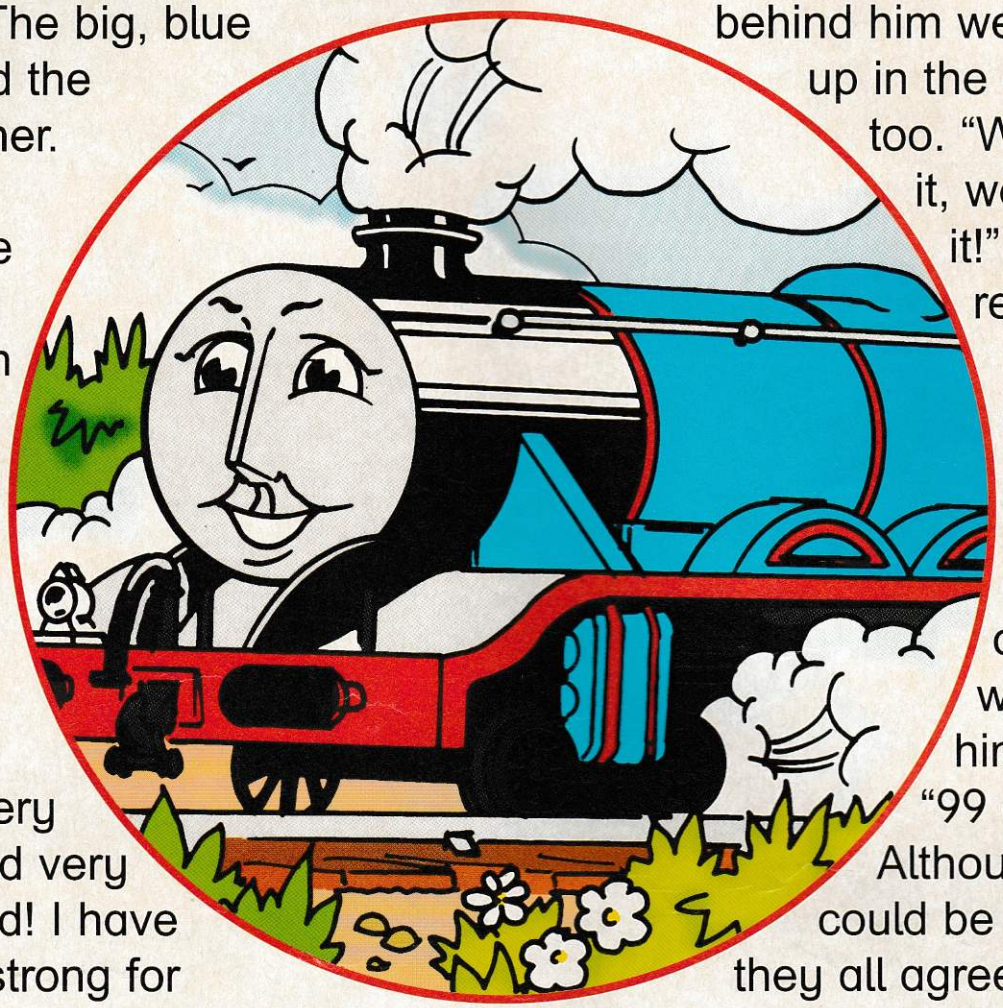
Gordon's 100 days!

Gordon came chuffing noisily into the station yard one day, even more puffed up with pride than usual. The big, blue engine called the others together. "Now pay attention little engines," he began, which annoyed Thomas and Percy straight away! "I am about to achieve something very important and very Useful indeed! I have been going strong for many weeks now, and I am about to complete 100 days of work without a breakdown! This is what people call 'Breaking a Record'. I know you must all be very excited!" "You'd better not break anything else though, Gordon, the Fat Controller won't be pleased!" chirped up Thomas, cheekily. But Gordon was feeling too big and important to care. "99 days! 99 days!" he puffed all day, as he pulled the Express back and forth. The carriages rattling behind him were caught up in the excitement too. "We can do it, we can do it!" they replied.



All the other engines couldn't get any other words out of him, except "99 days!" Although Gordon could be annoying, they all agreed they were very proud of him.

That night Gordon could hardly sleep with excitement. "They will call me 'Hundred Days Gordon'!" he told Edward. "Gordon the Great! The train they could not stop!"

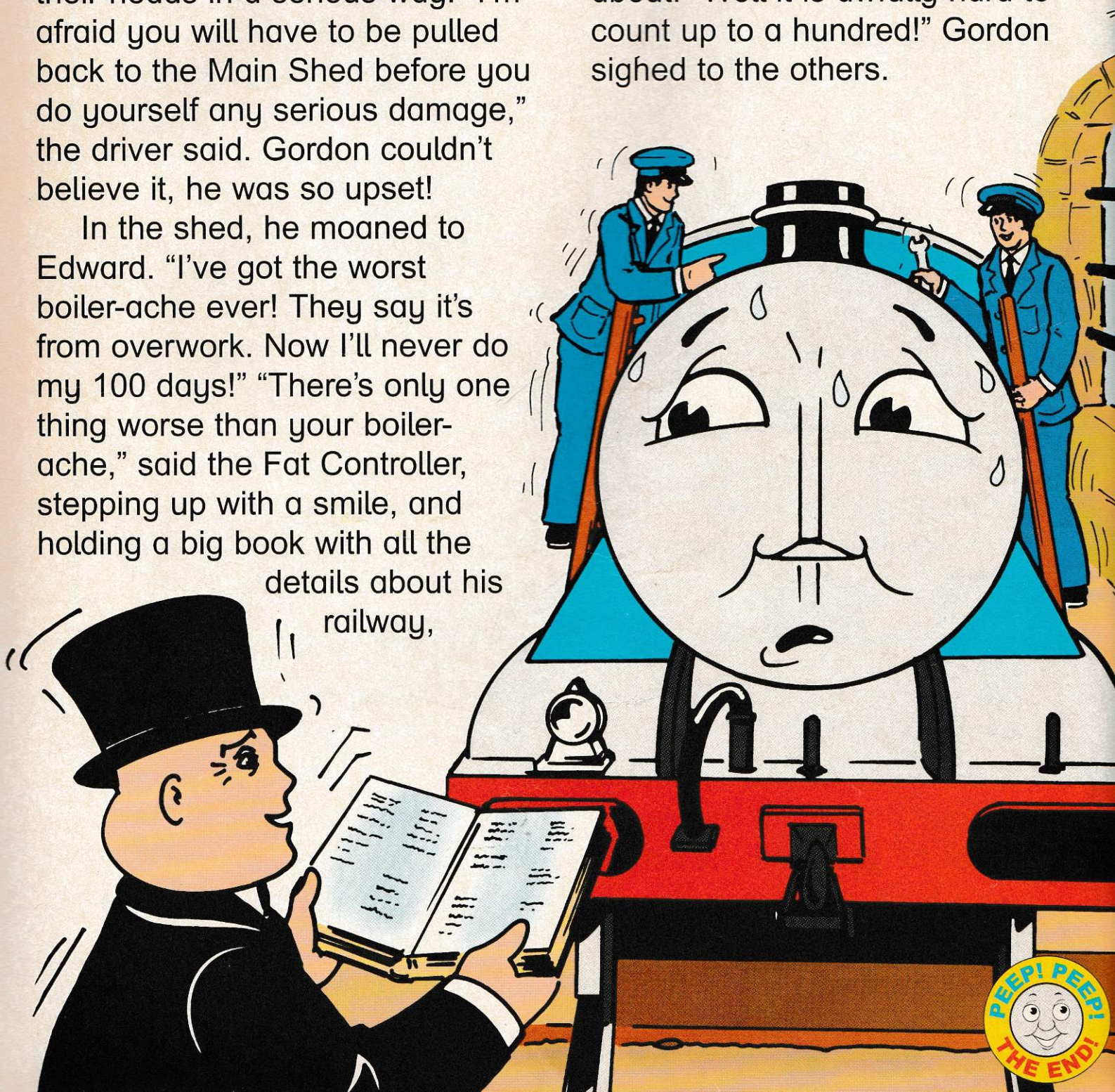
But oh dear! The next morning Gordon woke up with terrible boiler ache! "How are you feeling today, Gordon?" asked the driver,

noticing that the big engine looked a little pale. "Fine! Never better!" blustered Gordon. "I feel like going a hundred miles before breakfast!" But really his boiler felt about ready to burst.

Gordon set off as usual, but after half an hour he simply couldn't go on. The workmen came to look over him, and shook their heads in a serious way. "I'm afraid you will have to be pulled back to the Main Shed before you do yourself any serious damage," the driver said. Gordon couldn't believe it, he was so upset!

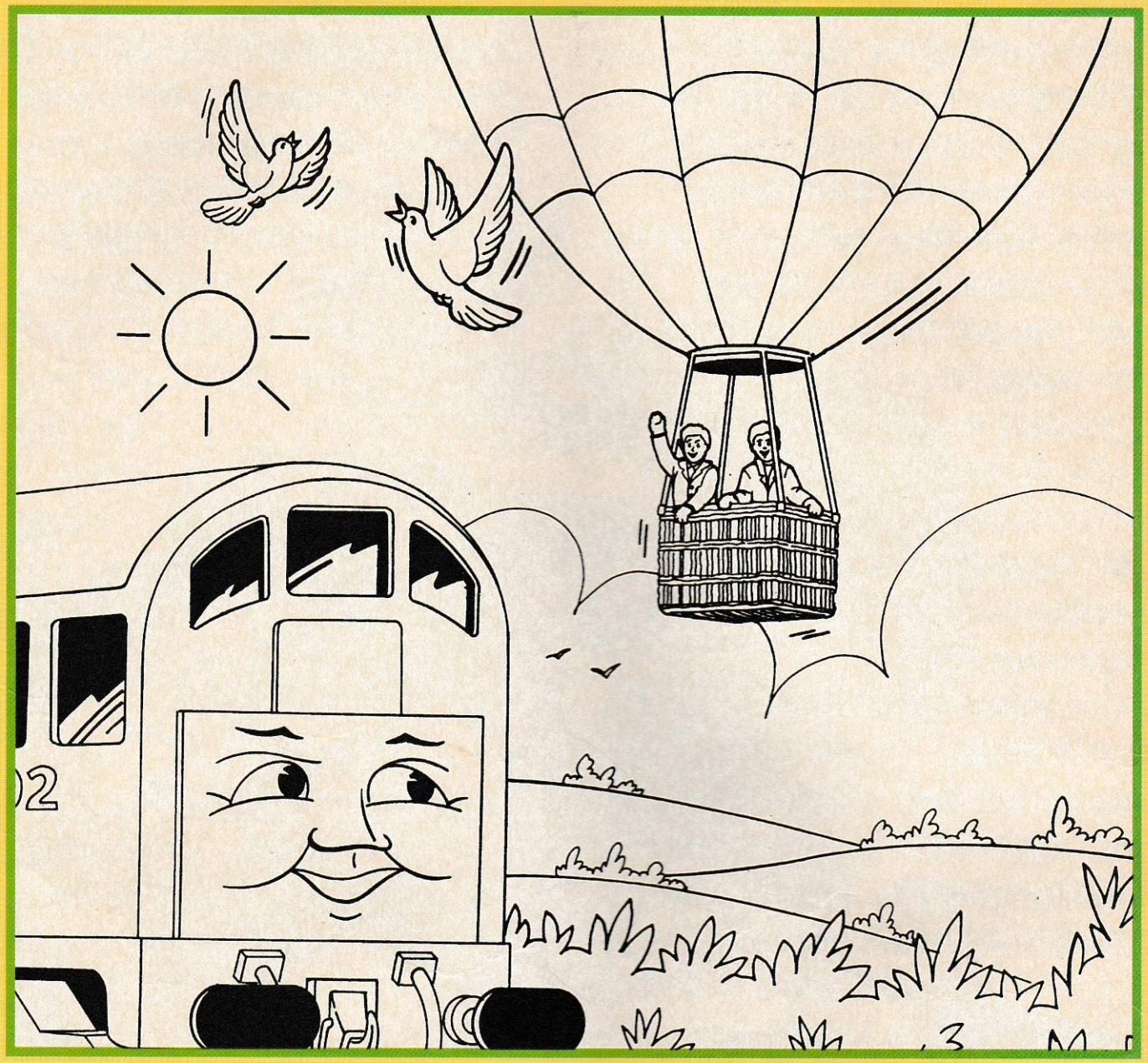
In the shed, he moaned to Edward. "I've got the worst boiler-ache ever! They say it's from overwork. Now I'll never do my 100 days!" "There's only one thing worse than your boiler-ache," said the Fat Controller, stepping up with a smile, and holding a big book with all the details about his railway, "and that's your adding up. I've checked the records, and your 100 days were completed yesterday! Congratulations!"

Gordon was delighted, and soon forgot his boiler-ache. The other engines were happy too, because although they were pleased for Gordon, it was nice to have something to tease him about. "Well it is awfully hard to count up to a hundred!" Gordon sighed to the others.



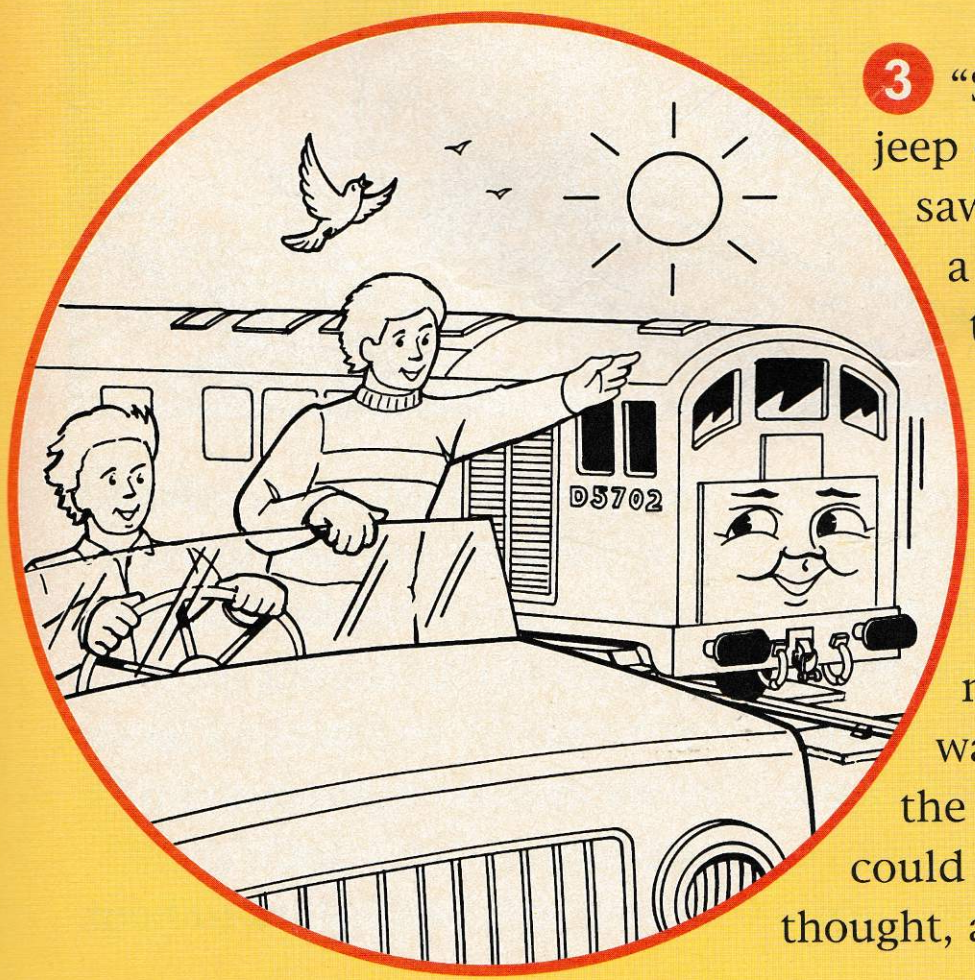
A read & colour story

BoCo and the Balloon!

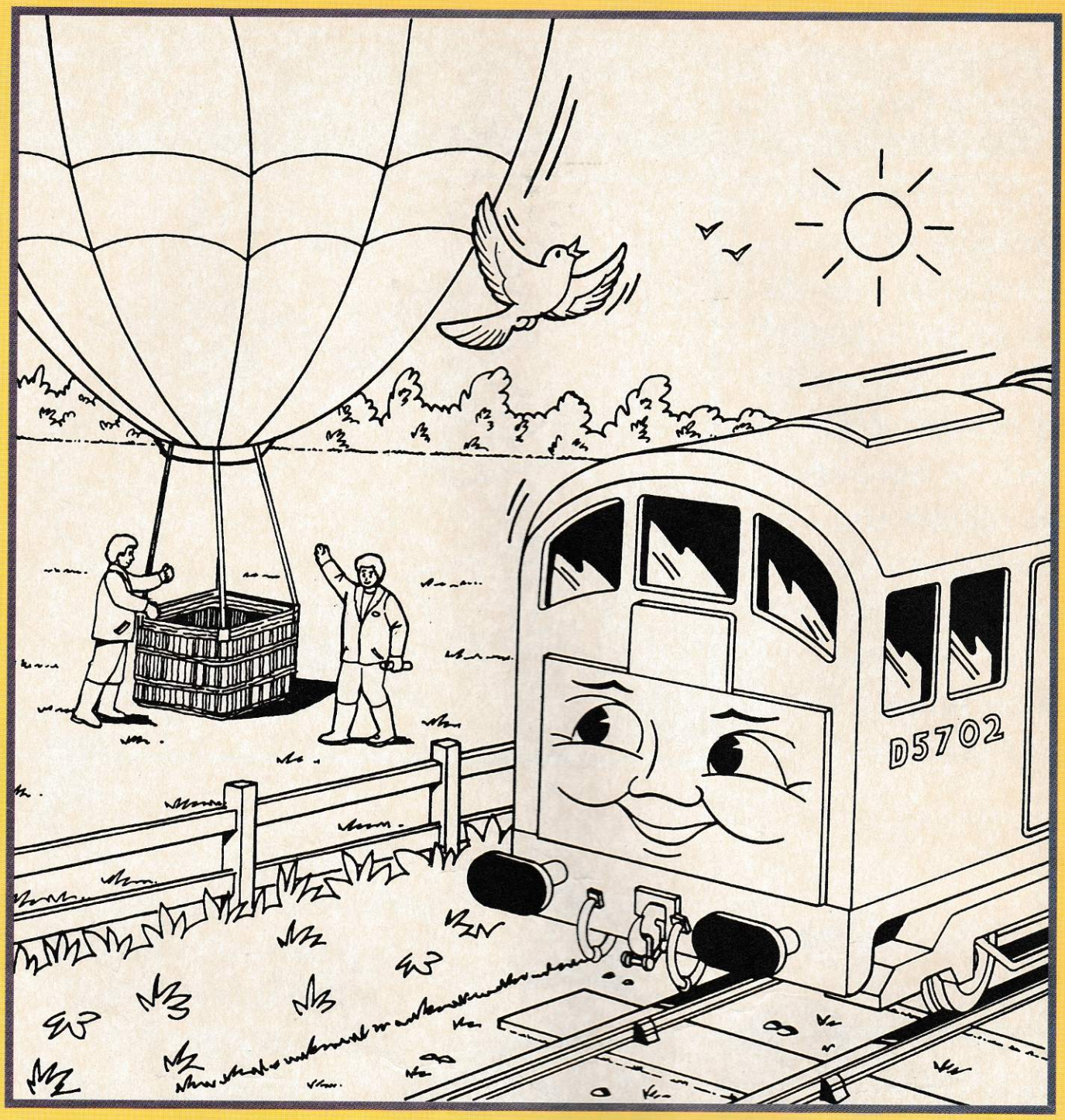


1 It was a lovely day. BoCo was puffing happily along the track, when he saw something strange floating in the sky. When he got closer he could see a big balloon with two men in a basket on the bottom. "Look at those men in that big balloon!" he said. "It's a hot air balloon," explained his driver. "There's a burner at the bottom which the men light to keep the air hot. The hot air makes the balloon rise. When the air cools, the balloon comes down again."

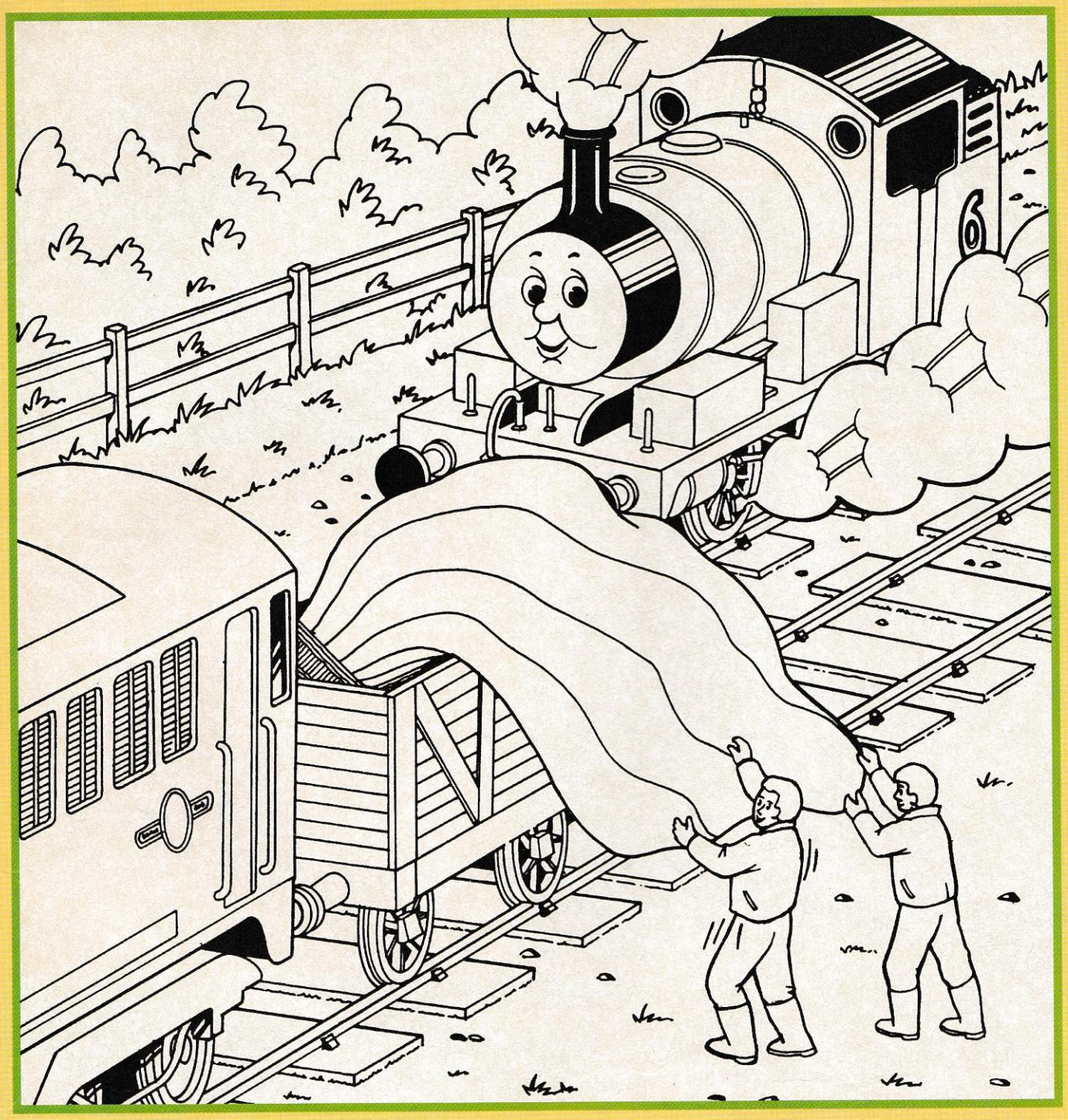
2 BoCo was very impressed but he was puzzled. "What if the balloon comes down in the middle of the countryside? How do the men get it home?" he asked. "It must be very heavy!" BoCo added. "A back-up team follows the balloon and when it comes down they take the men and the balloon home," BoCo's driver explained.



3 "See, they're in that jeep over there." BoCo saw the balloon quite a few times through the day. He kept watching it, hoping to see it come down. Then, as he was returning to the station, he noticed the balloon was floating gently to the ground. "I wish I could see it land," Boco thought, as he steamed away.



4 Suddenly, he realised he was going the wrong way. "The signal man was so busy watching the air balloon he sent you on the wrong track!" said BoCo's driver. "We'll have to turn around again." Just then, the balloon came down and landed right beside Boco. Two men got out and walked over to BoCo. "We've lost our back up team," one of the men said. "Could you take us back to the station to meet them?" "Of course," said BoCo's driver, who was happy to help.



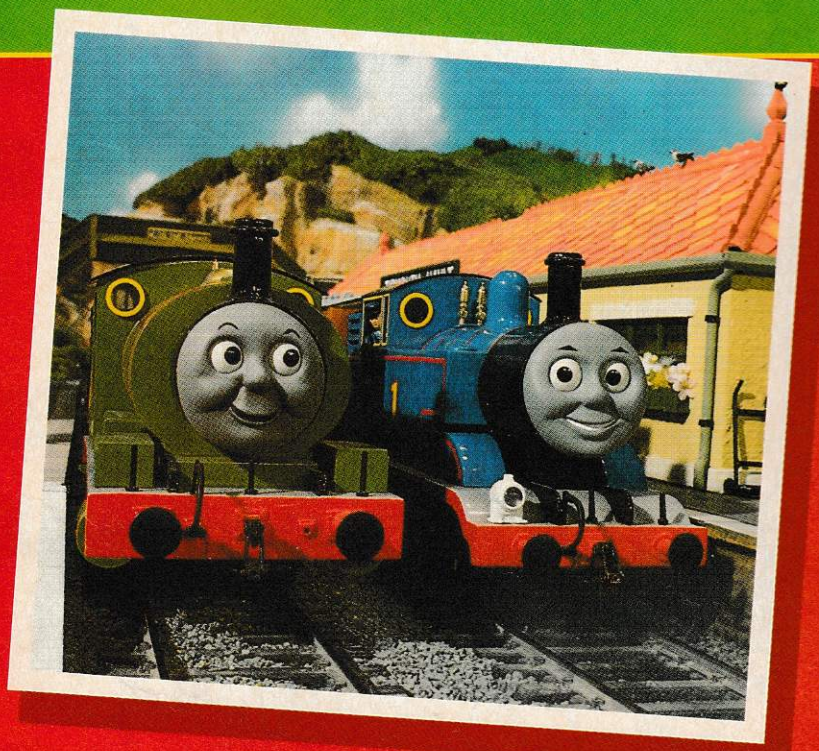
5 Boco was very excited as the men rolled up the big balloon and piled it into one of his trucks, then climbed aboard. He felt very important as he took them all back to the station. "Hello BoCo, did you see the hot air balloon today?" peeped Percy, as Boco pulled up. "What a way to travel!" "Yes, but even air balloons take the train sometimes," laughed Boco, as the men began to lift the air balloon out of his truck. Percy just couldn't believe his eyes!

The end

Percy's Promise

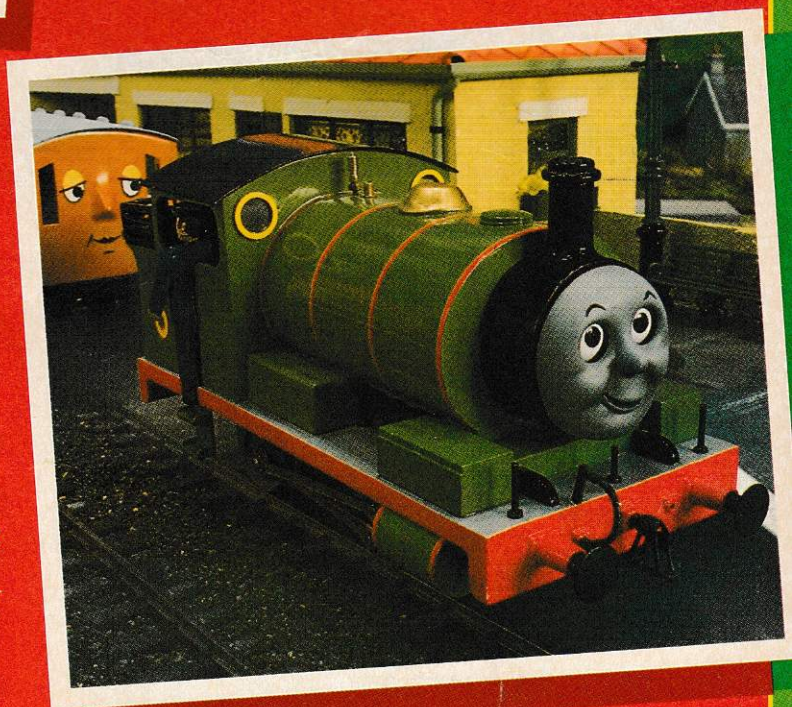
Based on *The Railway Series* by the Rev W Awdry.

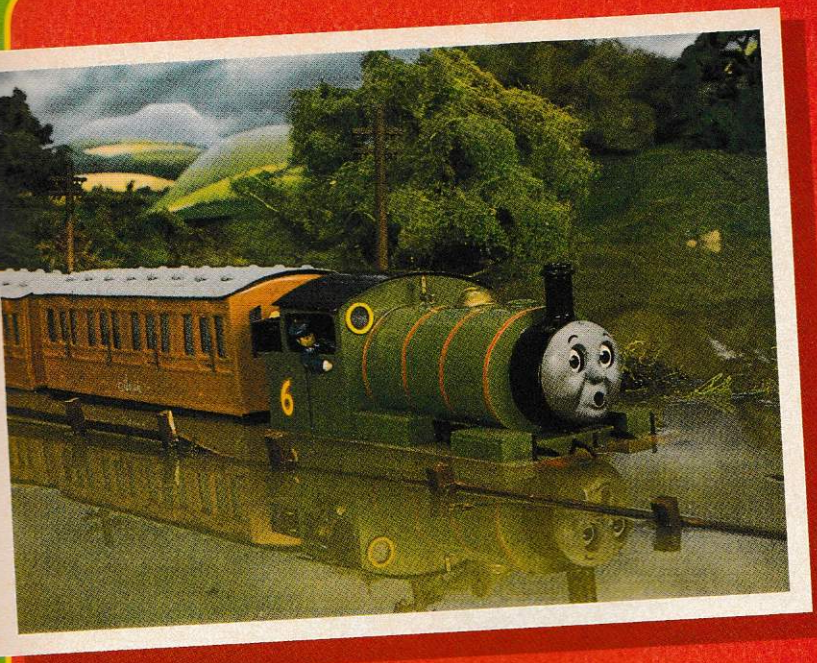
Every summer the Island of Sodor is very busy. Holidaymakers love to sight see and when the weather is fine, there is no better place to visit. Some people like to go to the mountains, others like the valleys. Children love the seaside!



1 One day while Percy was taking some trucks to the harbour, he saw Thomas taking some children to the seaside. "I'm busy this evening. Can you take the children home?" asked Thomas. "Of course I will," promised Percy, as he set off for the beach.

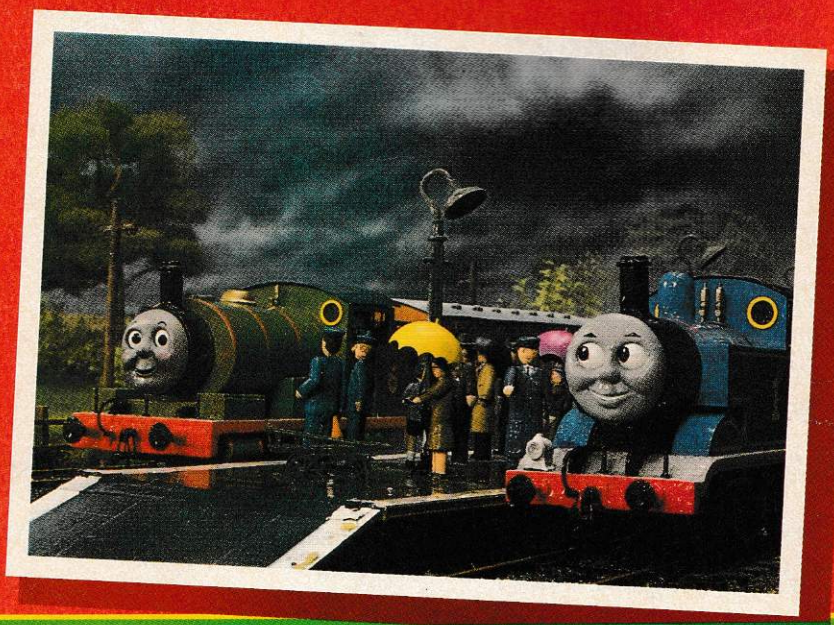
2 It was a beautiful day, but Edward warned, "be careful, there's a storm coming." "A promise is a promise, no matter what the weather. As long as I've got rails to run on I can get through anything," Percy said. Storm clouds loomed ahead. Annie and Clarabel were glad when Percy arrived at the station by the beach.





3 On the way home, rain streamed down Percy's boiler and nearly sloshed his fire out. The river was rising and water lapped at Percy's wheels. He was losing steam but plunged bravely on. "I promised," he panted. He made one more big effort and at last, exhausted but triumphant, he brought the train home.

4 "Well done, Percy," cheered Thomas. "You kept your promise despite everything." The Fat Controller was very proud of him indeed and declared Percy "A Really Useful Engine." "Oh Sir," whispered little Percy, happily.



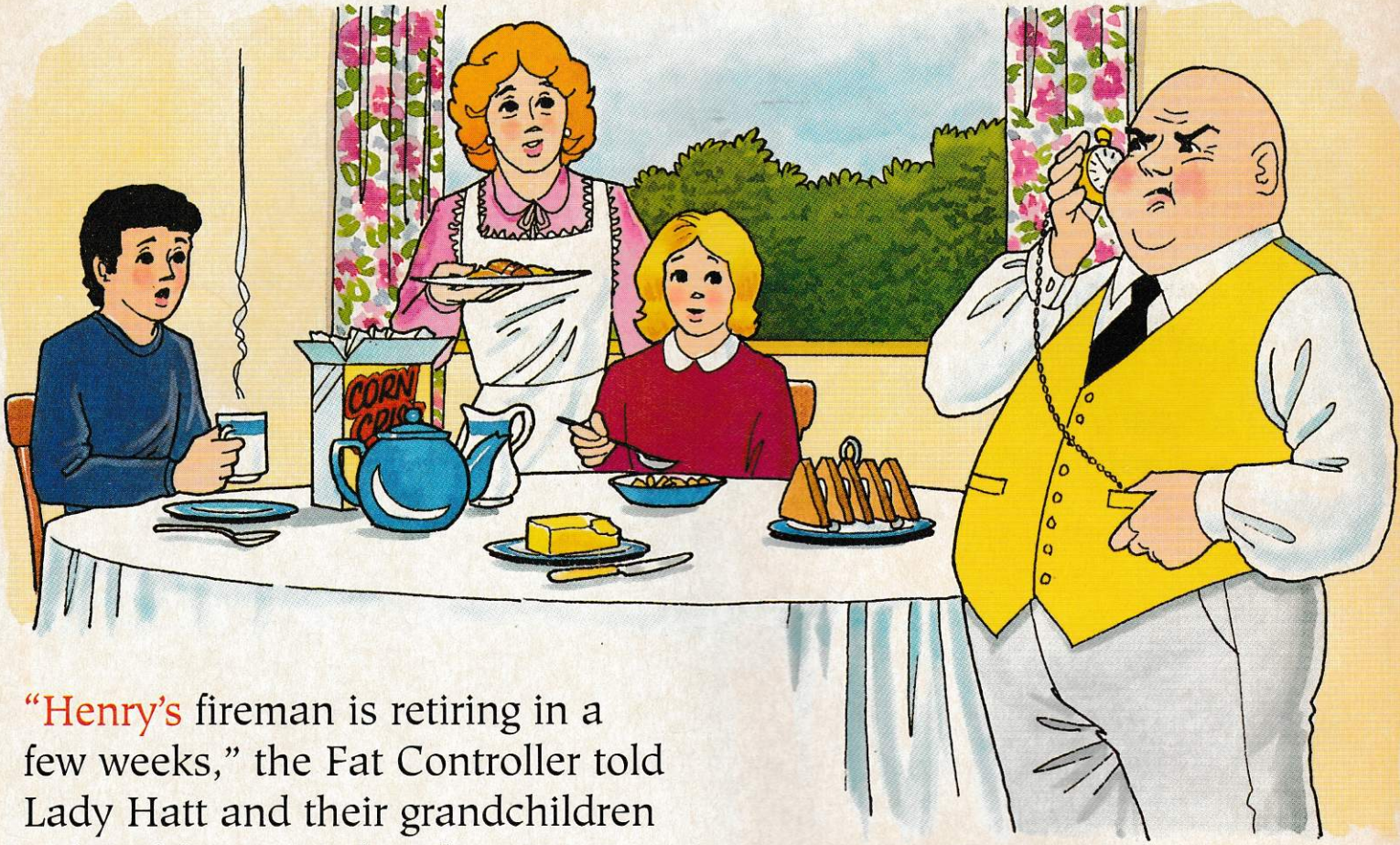
In Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends next time, you can read all about James and his joke!

Win a model of Percy!

Five lucky winners can win a splendid model of Percy from the ERTL engine range! Just send a postcard, with your name, age and address to: Thomas/255 model competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

Closing date: July 30th, 1997.

The Leaving Gift!

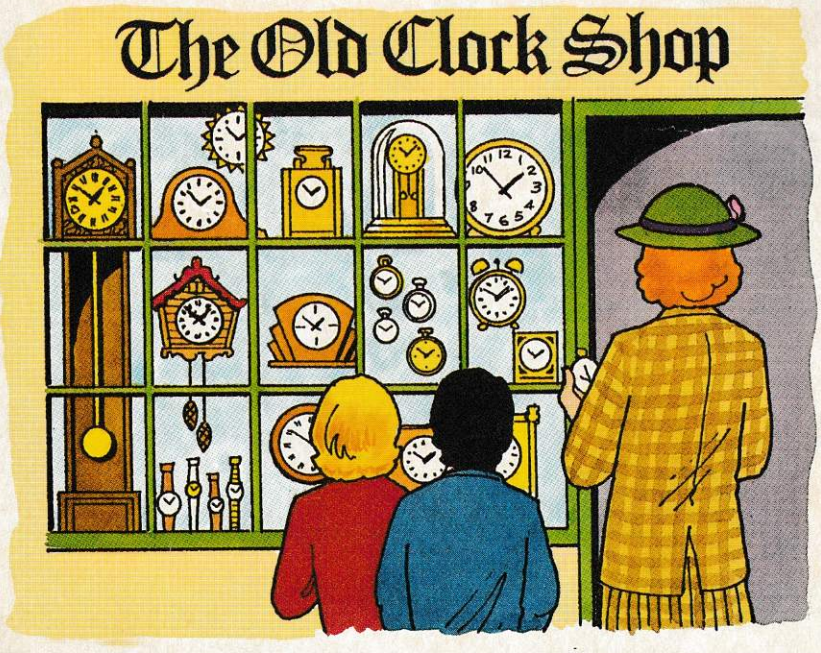


"Henry's fireman is retiring in a few weeks," the Fat Controller told Lady Hatt and their grandchildren at breakfast, one day. "I must think of a splendid leaving present for him." "We'll try too, grandpa," said Stephen and Bridget.

The Fat Controller smiled and pulled out the watch he always kept in his waistcoat pocket. "Dear me!" he frowned. "It's stopped. It was working when I wound it up, this morning."

The Fat Controller fetched his spare watch. "I always carry one," he told his grandchildren, "to check all my engines are running on time." "I'll get your other watch repaired for you," said Lady Hatt.

Soon the Fat Controller set off for the Main Station. Meanwhile, Stephen and Bridget went with their grandmother to a most unusual shop. It was full of watches and clocks of every kind. Some were new. Others were very old. TICK! TOCK! TICKETY-TOCK! DING-DONG! BING!

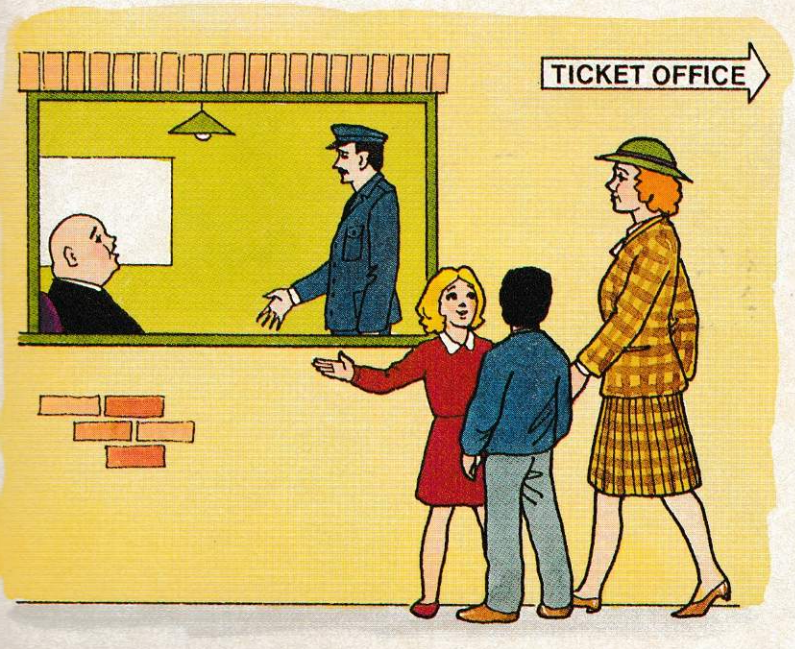


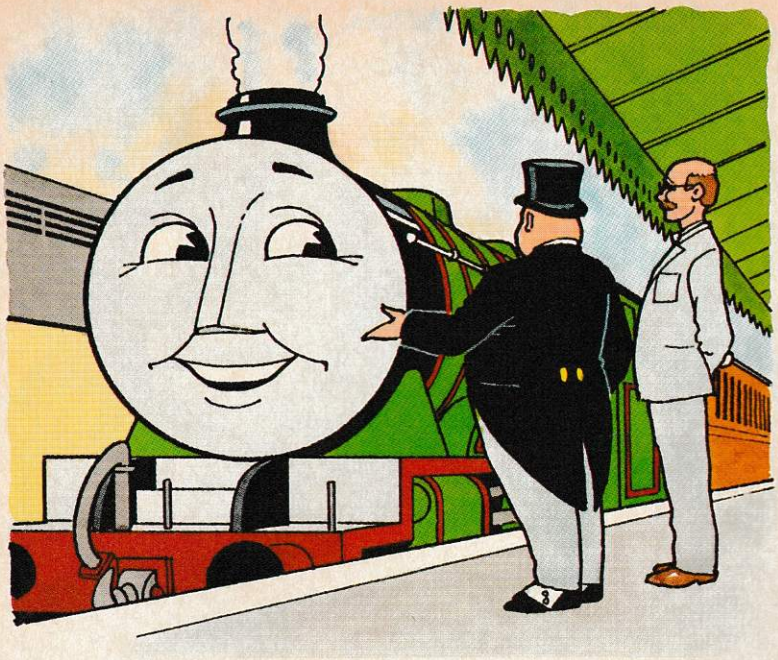
BONG! The sound of clocks carried throughout the shop, especially when they chimed on the hour. There were rows of clocks on shelves. Many more hung on the walls. Some had shiny, brass faces, others had pictures on them. There were tall clocks, short clocks, round clocks and square clocks. "I never knew they came in so many shapes and sizes!" gasped Stephen.

The shop owner was very clever. He could make or mend clocks and watches. He opened the back of the Fat Controller's watch and peered inside with a magnifying glass.
"H'm!" he said. "It just needs a clean. I'll have it ready tomorrow."

Later, Lady Hatt and the children went to the Main Station to tell the Fat Controller. He was sitting in his office with the stationmaster. "What about a pen?" asked the Fat Controller. "Or a painting?" suggested the stationmaster. "There must be something really special we can give Henry's fireman."

Stephen, Bridget and Lady Hatt overheard. "How about a watch?" said Lady Hatt. "I know just the place to buy it." The Fat Controller shook his head. "Henry's fireman





had one from his wife, only last week, for his birthday," he replied. "He told us so, himself."

Stephen and Bridget suddenly had an idea. They whispered for a moment. "We know something Henry's fireman won't have," Bridget spoke up.

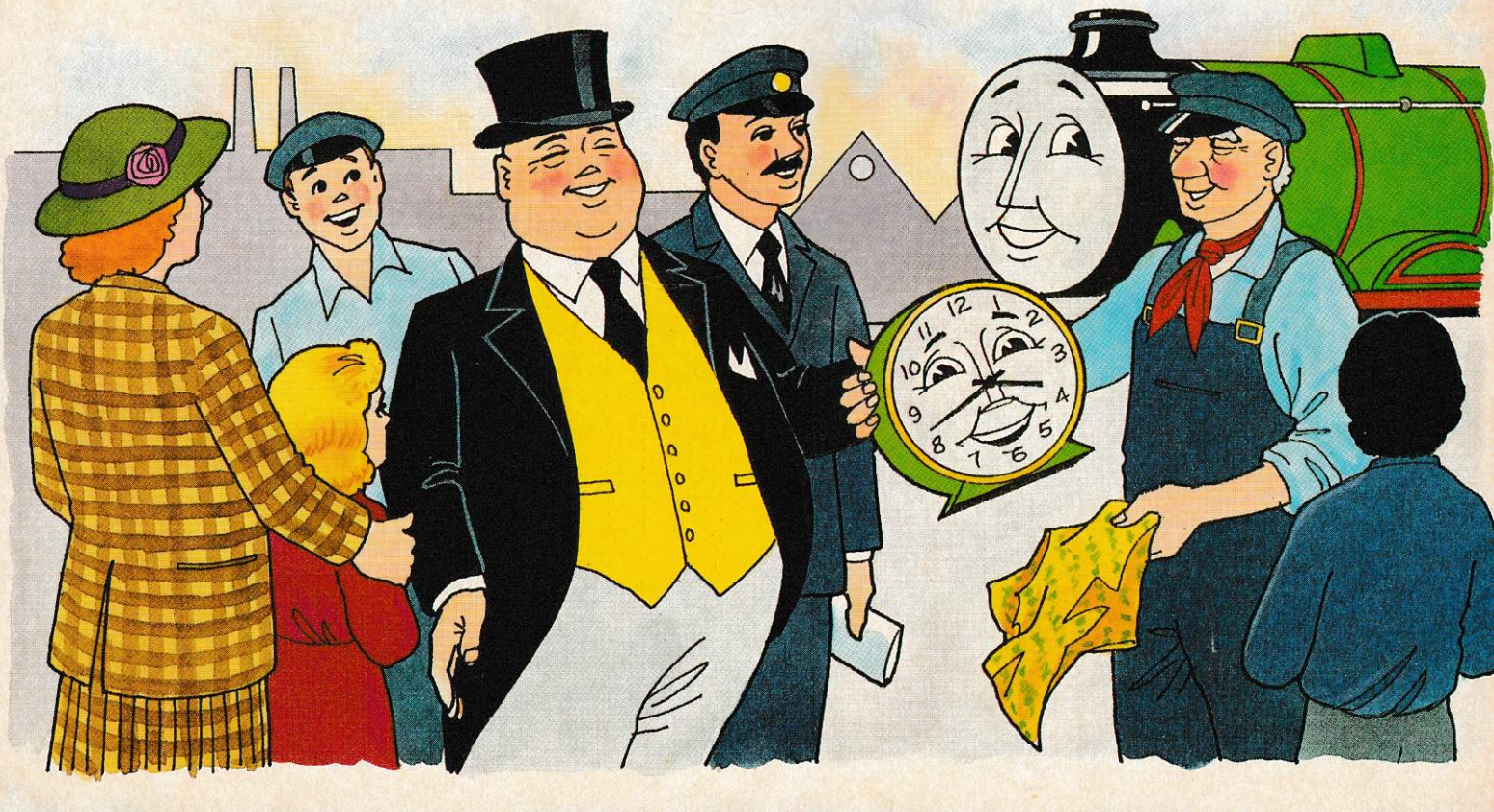
She quickly explained their idea. Then the Fat Controller rang the clock shop and invited the owner to the Main Station. He met Henry while the fireman took an afternoon off work.

When the day came for the fireman to leave, the Fat Controller called the staff together for a special presentation. Stephen, Bridget and Lady Hatt were there, too. "Your leaving present from us all was my grandchildren's idea," the Fat Controller told the fireman.

The children smiled proudly. Then Stephen carefully handed over the parcel. Can you guess what was inside? It was a big clock with a face just like Henry's.

Henry's fireman was very surprised. He did not expect such an unusual gift. "Perfect," smiled the delighted fireman. "Now, I'll still see Henry whenever I look at the time!"

The End



Dot to dot!

A picnic on a lovely day, how does Bridget take the food away?

When you have finished colour this page!

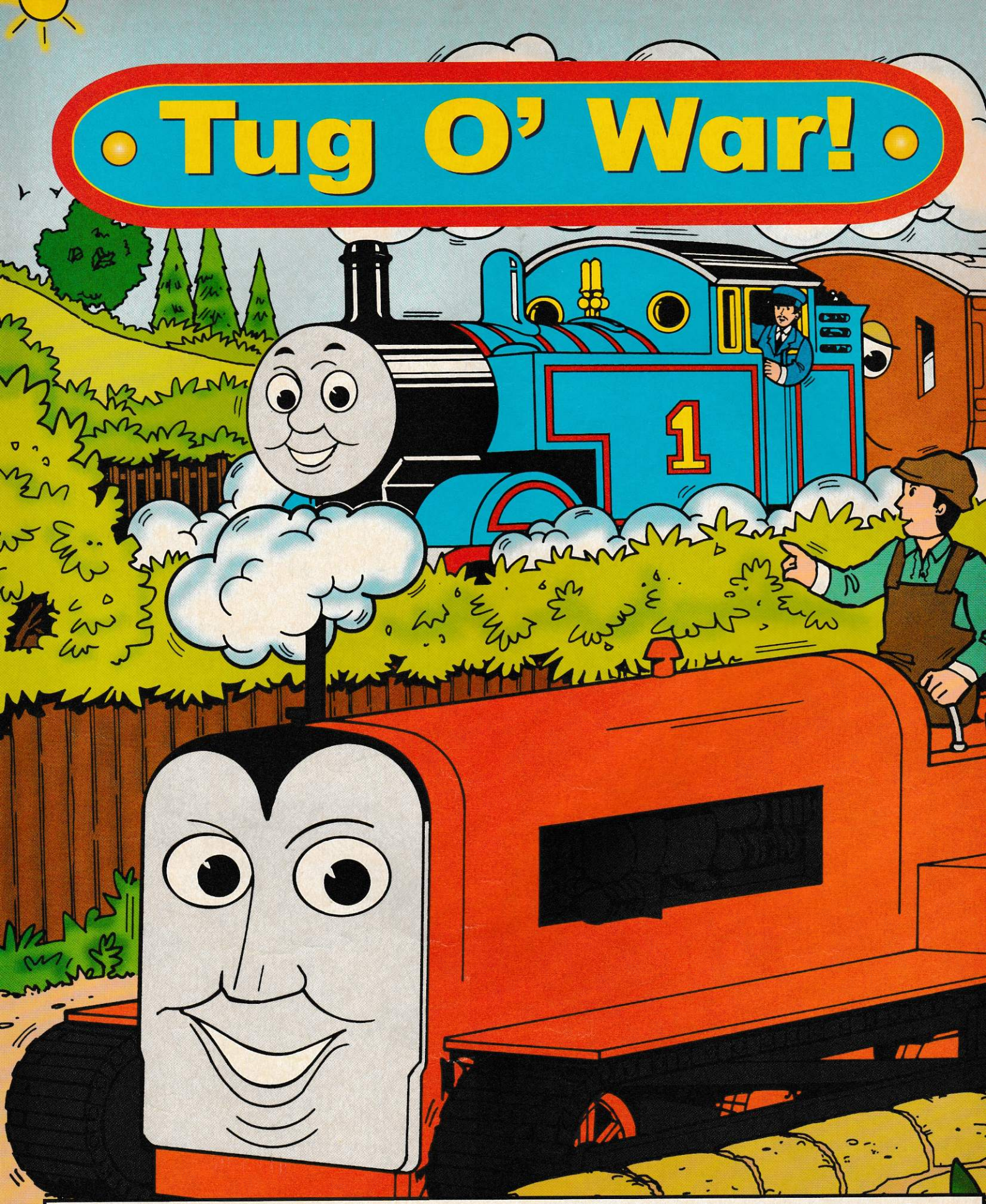
Colouring time

Thomas loves taking the Seaside Special! Why don't you finish

with Thomas!

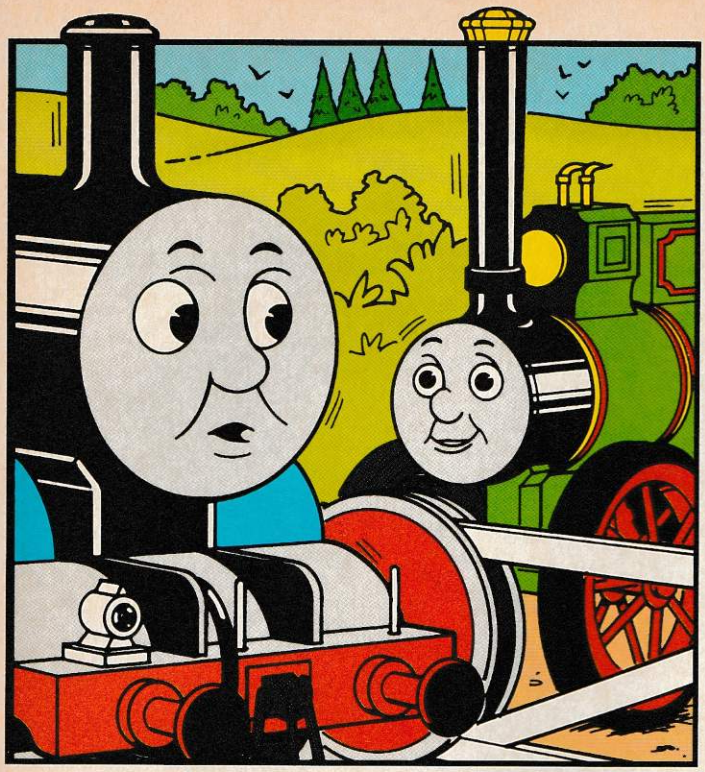
this splendid summer scene using your coloured crayons?

Tug O' War!

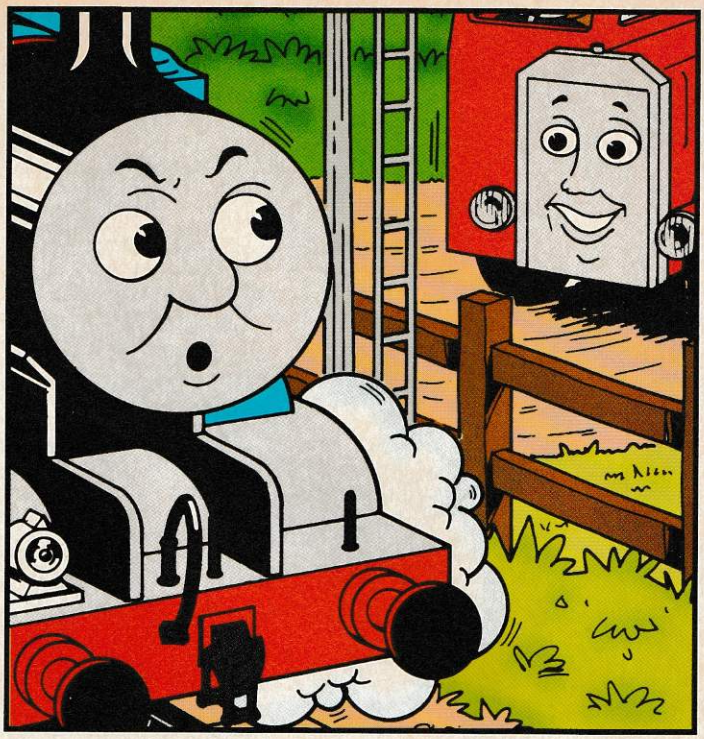


1. Early one morning Thomas was out on his branch line when he saw his friend, Terence the Tractor. "PHEEEP! You're looking smart today, Terence. Where are you going?" he called.

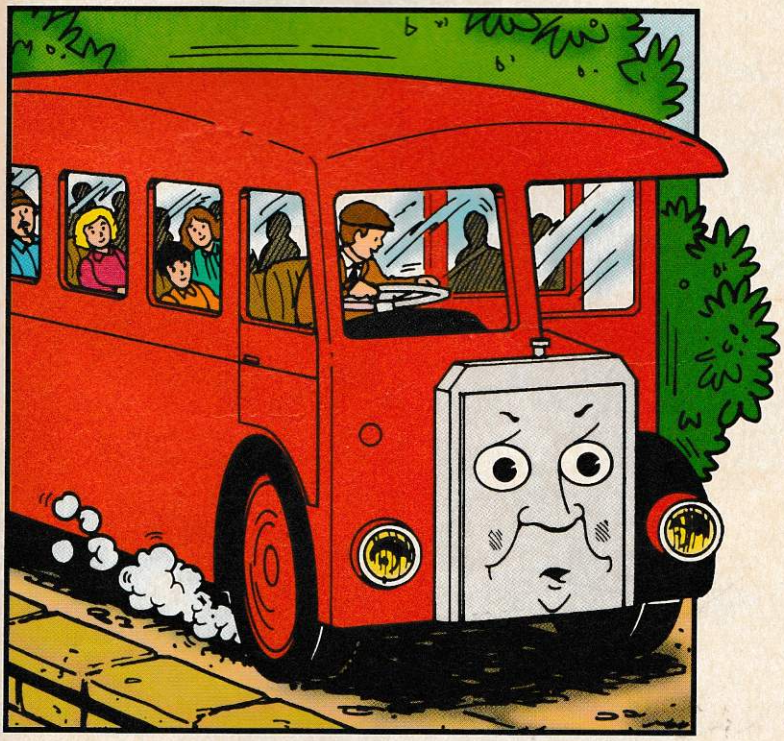
2. "I'm off to Tidmouth Country Fayre, to do a farming demonstration," he replied. "There's also going to be a Tug O' War competition, between the Island men and the Mainland men!"



3. Later that morning, Thomas met another friend, Trevor the Traction Engine. "Good morning Thomas, I'm going to the Fayre, to give rides to all the children!" he explained, proudly.



4. It wasn't long before Thomas ran into Bertie the Bus, at a level crossing. "Bertie are you going to the Tidmouth Country Fayre too?" he asked. "I should say!" replied the bus, excitedly.

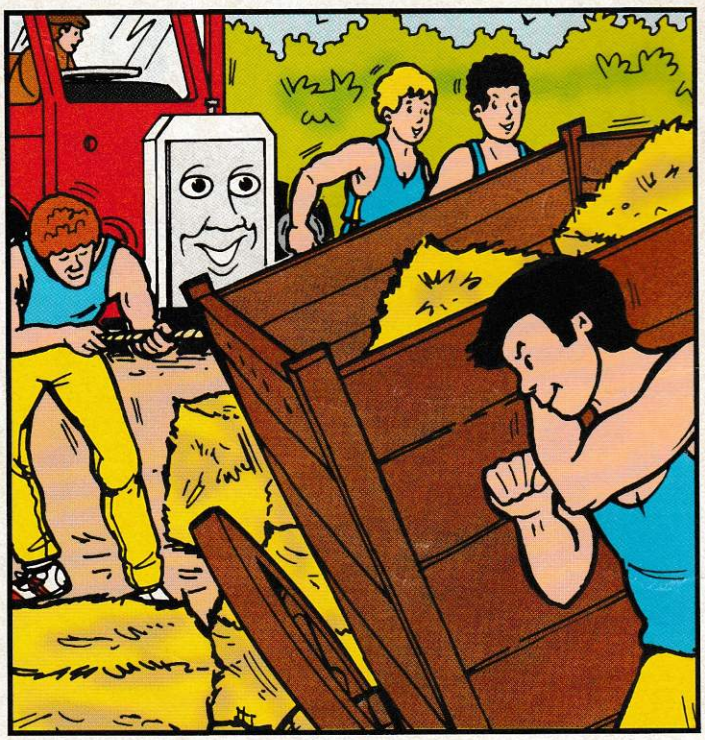


5. "I'm packed with passengers, all going to the Fayre!" said hardworking Bertie. "Then I've got to pick up the Island men Tug O' War team at Wellsworth," he added, importantly.

6. The Tidmouth Country Fayre was a lively place to be. When Bertie arrived a dog show was just beginning. There were plenty of stalls and people were getting excited about the Tug O' War!

7. The Mainland men arrived early. While they waited for the Island men, they enjoyed the Fayre, especially the coconut shy! It was a long wait, though, and the crowd began to get impatient.

8. All this time, poor Bertie was having difficulty getting anywhere! The Island men were on board, but an accident was holding him up. A haywagon, on its way to the Fayre, had toppled over!



9. Bales of hay were all over the road and the wagon was half in the ditch and half in the road. "Come on men, this is a job for us!" shouted one of the Tug O' War team, to the others.

10. The big, strong team pulled the wagon out of the ditch, and worked very hard to reload it. The crowd had heard what had happened and gave them a big cheer when they arrived!

11. In the Tug O' War, the tired Island men did their best. "Good Luck!" peeped Bertie. It was a very close contest, but the Mainland men won. Afterwards, the Farmer, who the Island men had helped, came over. "I'd like you to come to the farm for supper!" he announced, with a smile. The Island men were delighted! They all got on the bus and Bertie followed the farmer's tractor back to the farm.

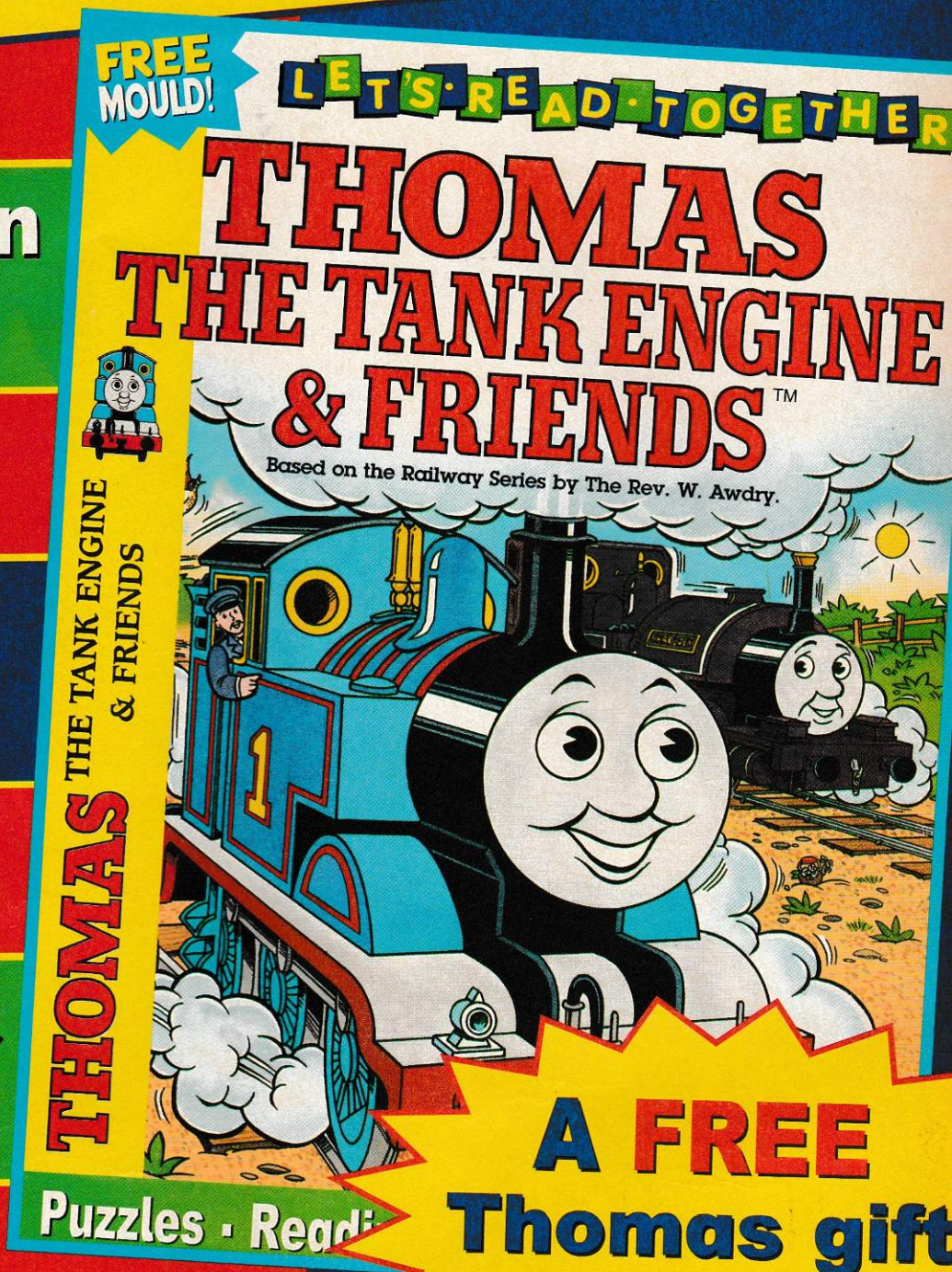
12. "Tuck in!" said the farmer's wife, and the men, who were hungry after their energetic day, really enjoyed the tasty meal. "Look at their happy faces!" exclaimed Bertie. His driver laughed, as he joined in the fun. "They might have lost the Tug O' War, but they've won a farmhouse supper!" The captain agreed. "The perfect end to an eventful day out!" he grinned, between munches!

In the NEXT ISSUE!

Competition fun!

Stories & puzzles!

Reading & colouring!



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The m

Thanks, Jack Evans, for this brilliant picture of Thomas and his driver!

Star Letter

Dear Fat Controller,
Why are you called Sir Topham Hatt?

From Shane Lynch, aged 4.

Well, that's my real name! 'The Fat Controller' is the affectionate nickname given to me by my faithful engines but they always call me Sir to my face!

The sender of any letter that is printed as our STAR LETTER will win a splendid Thomas carry case!

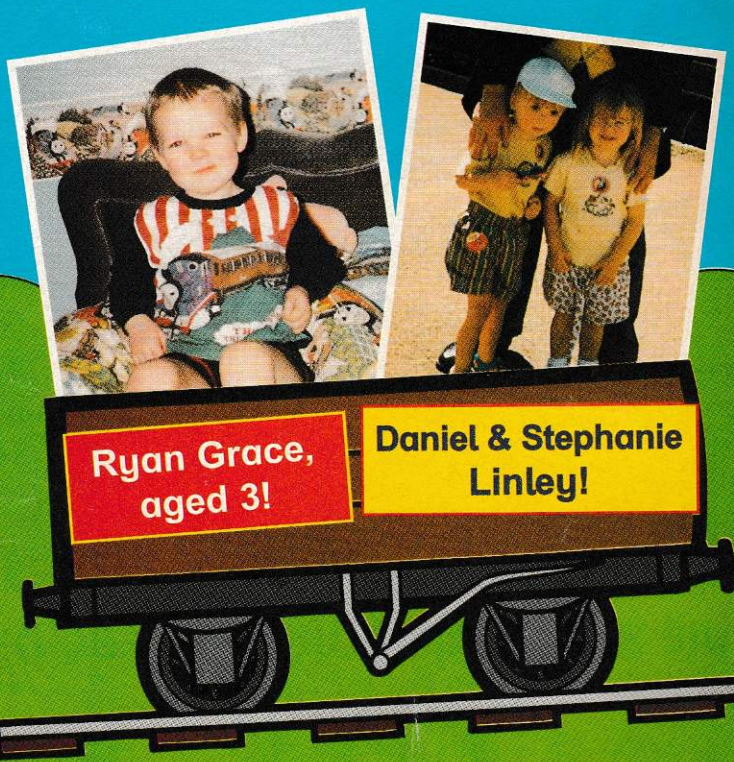
Prize Poem!

Thanks to Elizabeth Crossley, for this great poem!

When Thomas & Bertie had a race,
Bertie got so dirty, he stopped
to wash his face!
Thomas zoomed along the track,
With Annie & Clarabel singing at his back.
"Go Thomas go, Bertie's behind & he's too slow!
Bertie raced down the road,
Over a bridge he nearly lost his load!
Thomas crossed the finishing line
and the race was won,
Thomas we love you, engine number one!

Happy Birthday

TO: Aaron Wigman, aged 3, Lee Phillips, aged 6, Jordan Knight, aged 4, Scott Smith, aged 4, Robert & Abigail Hall, Samuel Sturch, aged 4, James Newell, aged 6 & Ashley Crellin, aged 4!



Please send your letters, pictures and drawings to Mail Tr

ail train!

Anyone who has a drawing printed on this page will win a set of special Thomas Glitter Stickers.

Happy Harold looks very smart in this drawing by 7 year old, Jamie Ballard!

Samantha Amott, has sent in this marvellous picture of me!

Percy's Jokes!

Have you got a favourite joke or funny story? Why not send it to Percy?

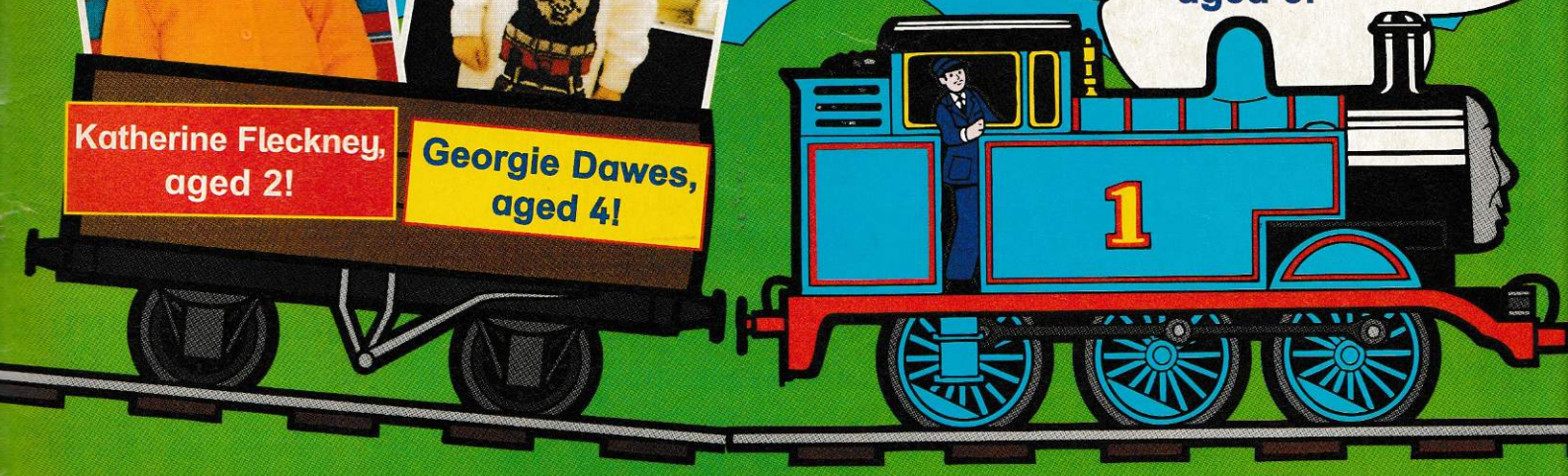
What do you give a sick bird?
Tweetment!
Jean-Luc Woods, aged 6!

What's the best thing to put in a pie?
Your teeth!
Kevin Francis, aged 4!

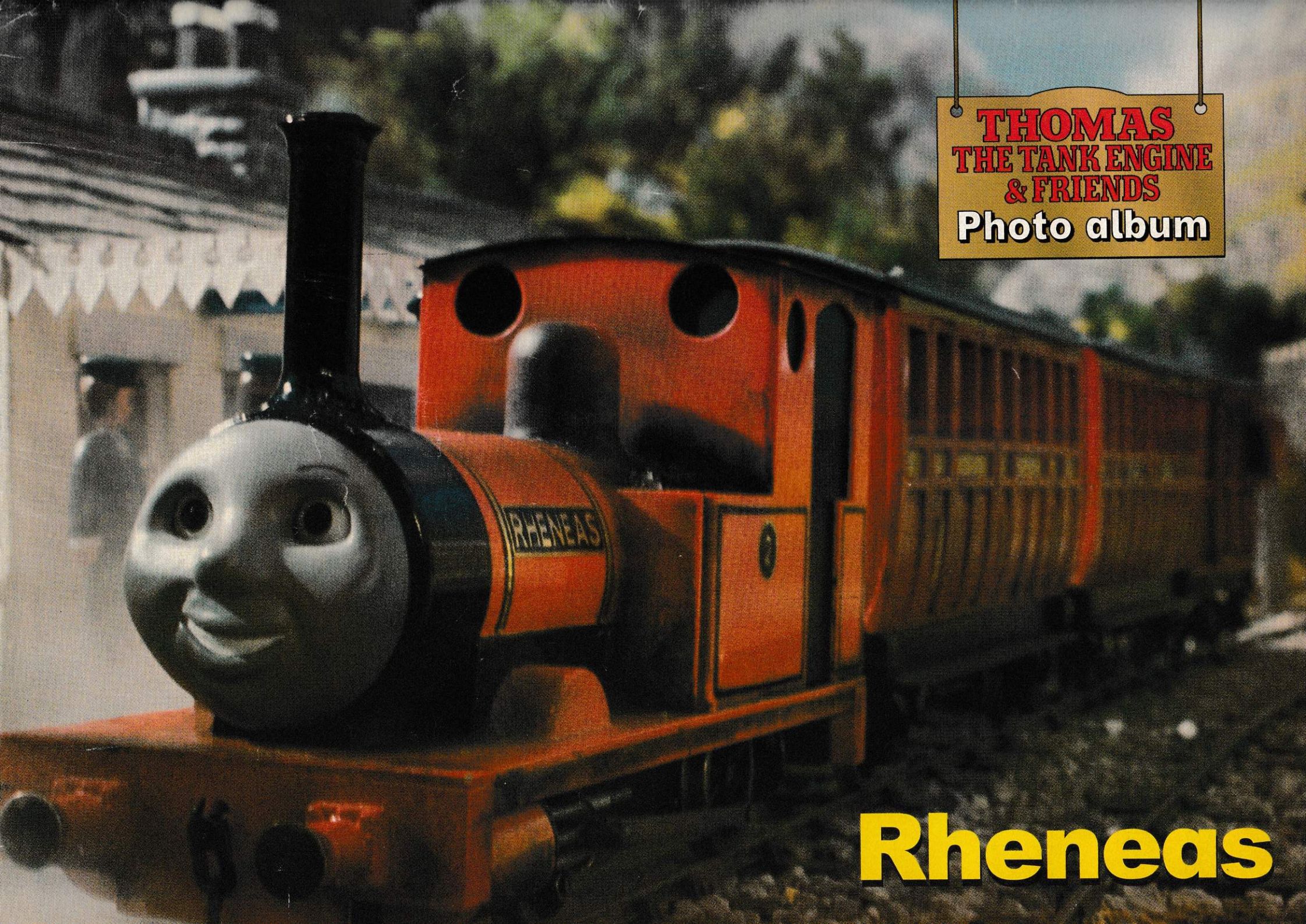
Knock, knock,
Who's there?
Cows go.
Cows go who?
No - cows go moo!
Ben Lawrence, aged 6!

Katherine Fleckney, aged 2!

Georgie Dawes, aged 4!



n, Thomas, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach & Horses Passage, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.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